

Message Text

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TAGS: PGOV SHUM CI
SUBJECT: WASHINGTON POST EDITORIAL AROUSES CHILEAN NATIONALISM

1. SUMMARY: THE SANTIAGO PRESS HAS REPORTED AND QUOTED EXTENSIVELY THE WASHINGTON POST EDITORIAL OF JUNE 10 CALLING FOR PINOCHET'S RESIGNATION AND SUGGESTING THAT THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS MIGHT FORM A NEW GOVERNMENT. BEGINNING ON TELEVISION THE EVENING OF JUNE 11, AND CONTINUING IN THE PRESS JUNE 12 AND 13, THE MEDIA HAS PROJECTED THE IMAGE OF DEEPLY OFFENDED CHILEAN NATIONALISM. ABOUT 50 YOUTH REPORTEDLY BURNED A U.S. FLAG IN DOWNTOWN SANTIAGO THE NIGHT OF JUNE 12. FOREIGN MINISTER CUBILLOS HAS ATTEMPTED TO COOL THE REACTION, BUT OUR GUESS IS THAT THE EDITORIAL HAS HELPED PINOCHET AND HURT THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS. END SUMMARY

2. THE WASHINGTON POST EDITORIAL, "AT PINOCHET'S DOORSTEP" WAS REPORTED, AND QUOTED EXTENSIVELY, BY "EL MERCURIO" JUNE 11 AND BY OTHER SANTIAGO PAPERS THE FOLLOWING DAY. THREE WELL-KNOWN CONSERVATIVE SUPPORTERS OF PINOCHET (PEDRO IBANEZ, HUGO ROSENDE AND JULIO DURAN) APPEARED ON TELEVISION JUNE 11 AND DENOUNCED THE EDITORIAL AS EVIDENCE OF RENEWED UNITED STATES INTERVENTION IN CHILE. THEIR VIEWS AND THOSE OF OTHER LEADERS, AS WELL AS MAN-IN-
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THE STREE TYPE INTERVIEWS, HAVE OCCUPIED PROMINENT SPACE IN THE JUNE 12 AND 13 PAPERS. MANUEL VALDES, PRESIDENT OF THE INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE ASSOCIATION CALLED THE EDITORIAL A PART OF THE CAMPAIGN BY CHILE'S ENEMIES. DOMINGO DURAN, PRESIDENT OF THE AGRICULTURE PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION ALSO SCORED THE EDITORIAL AS AN EXPRESSION OF AMERICAN IMPERIALISM. TWO TRADE UNION LEADERS, RUAL

ORREGO, THE EX-PRESIDENT OF THE GOVERNMENT-SPONSORED LABOR FRONT AND PRESIDENT OF THE FARM WORKERS CONFEDERATION, SAID THAT THE AMERICANS DO NOT HAVE THE MORAL RIGHT TO RECOMMEND THAT CHILEANS HAND OVER THEIR GOVERNMENT TO THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS WHO PAVED THE WAY FOR THE ATTEMPTED MARXIST TAKE-OVER IN CHILE. ARMANDO AGUIRRE, SOCIALIST PRESIDENT OF THE LEATHER AND SHOE WORKERS, CONDEMNED IN GENERAL TERMS INTERFERENCE BY ANY GOVERNMENT AND SPECIFICALLY CALLED THE POST EDITORIAL AN UNNECESSARY INTERVENTION IN CHILE'S INTERNAL AFFAIRS.

3. CONSERVATIVE DAILY "EL MERCURIO" CARRIES AN EDITORIAL JUNE 13 ENTITLED "THE WATERGATE COMPLEX". BY "WATERGATE COMPLEX" THE EDITORS MEAN THE TENDENCY OF AMERICAN JOURNALISTS TO MOVE FROM BEING REPORTERS AND COMMENTATORS ON EVENTS TO ACTUALLY TAKING A HAND IN GUIDING AND DIRECTING THEM. HAVING SUCCEEDED INTERNALLY SOME ARE NOW TEMPTED TO TRY THEIR HANDS ABROAD. IN THE CASE OF CHILE, THE WASHINGTON POST IS MISTAKEN ON TWO COUNTS; FIRST THAT THE LETELIER INVESTIGATION IS LEADING CHILEANS TO BELIEVE THAT THE PINOCHET GOVERNMENT HAS OUTLIVED ITS USEFULNESS; AND, SECOND, THAT EVIDENT PROGRESS TOWARD RETURNING CHILE TO NORMALITY MAKES A MILITARY REGIME NO LONGER NECESSARY. THE EDITORIAL COMMENTS THAT THE WASHINGTON POST IS BADLY INFORMED ABOUT CHILE AND THAT "NOTHING CAN UNITE THE CITIZENS OF OUR COUNTRY MORE STRONGLY IN SUPPORT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OF THEIR GOVERNMENT" THAN COMMENTS SUCH AS THOSE MADE BY THE WASHINGTON POST. AND IT NOTES THAT THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS CAN HARDLY BE PLEASED TO SEE THEMSELVES IDENTIFIED AS THE CANDIDATES OF A U.S. NEWSPAPER AND "AS POTENTIAL SIGNATORIES OF THE POLITICAL SURRENDER OF CHILE". "EL MERCURIO" CONCLUDES THAT THE WASHINGTON POST EDITORIAL INDICATES THAT THE EXTERNAL ATTACK ON CHILE IS GOING TO BECOME STRONGER, AND THAT CHILEANS MUST STAND TOGETHER AS NEVER BEFORE.

4. THE MOST SENSIBLE COMMENTS TO DATE CAME FROM FOREIGN MINISTER CUBILLOS JUNE 12. IN ANSWER TO REPORTERS' QUESTIONS HE NOTED THAT THE EDITORIAL REPRESENTED THE VIEW-POINT OF AN AMERICAN NEWSPAPER, NOT THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT, AND THAT IT WAS FOR THE CHILEAN PRESS, NOT HIM, TO RESPOND TO IT. BY CONTRAST, GOVERNMENT SECRETARY GENERAL VIDAL IS REPORTED BY THE JUNE 13 RADIO HAS HAVING TOLD REPORTERS THAT THE WASHINGTON POST EDITORIAL IS INJURIOUS AND TOTALLY LACKING IN RESPECT FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF CHILE.

5. ACCORDING TO NOT ALWAYS RELIABLE "LA SEGUNDA", ABOUT

50 YOUTH BURNED A U.S. FLAG IN DOWNTOWN SANTIAGO THE NIGHT
OF JUNE 12 -- PROTESTING AGAINST THE WASHINGTON POST
EDITORIAL.

6. COMMENT: WHILE THE CONSERVATIVE AND OTHER SUPPORTERS
OF THE CURRENT GOVERNMENT ARE OUTRAGED BY THE WASHINGTON
POST EDITORIAL, THEY MUST BE SECRETELY PLEASED AT THE
OPPORTUNITY TO FAN THE FLAMES OF NATIONALISM. FOR THE
SAME REASON THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS AND OTHER OPPONENTS
OF THIS REGIME, WHILE NO DOUBT AGREEING WITH MUCH OF THE
EDITORIAL, ARE KEEPING VERY QUIET.
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